

Ensuring Educational Equity

The Mead School District is committed to the success of every student in each of our schools and to achieving our mission of each student being future ready. We expect every student to meet or exceed academic standards and be fully prepared to make productive life decisions.

The concept of educational equity goes beyond formal equality where all students are treated the same – to fostering a barrier-free environment where all students, regardless of their race, class or other personal characteristics such as creed, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, age, economic status, gender, sexual orientation, including gender expression or identity, pregnancy status, marital status, physical appearance, the presence of any sensory, mental or physical disability, or the use of a trained service animal by a person with a disability, have the opportunity to benefit equally.

This means differentiating resource allocation, within budgetary limitations, to meet the needs of students who need more supports and opportunities to succeed academically. Each Mead School District student deserves respectful learning environments in which diversity is valued and contributes to successful academic outcomes. Educational equity benefits all students and our entire community.

We Believe

- Every student has a right to an equitable educational experience within the Mead School District.
- Every student has the potential to achieve and it is our responsibility to give each student the support needed to be successful.
- We believe the responsibility for addressing the disparities in opportunities and achievement among student groups rests with adults, not the children.
- The responsibility for student success is broadly shared by district staff, administrators, instructors, communities and families.

Catalyst for Change

With all public schools in Washington State held accountable for addressing opportunity and achievement gaps between groups of students, the Mead School District is committed to addressing and eliminating these gaps in kindergarten readiness, student achievement, discipline, attendance, graduation rates and post-secondary success. We resolve to address opportunity and achievement gaps at every level of our organization through review of policies, procedures and practices necessary to ensure success for every student.

Commitments

In order to address opportunity and achievement gaps the Mead School District commits to:

- I. Eliminate Systemic Disparities
To interrupt systems that perpetuate inequities the Mead School District will:
 - A. Invite and include people from all backgrounds to examine issues and develop solutions that address root causes and systems rather than one-time fixes.
 - B. Prepare staff to address the role and presence of bias, prejudice and racism.

- C. Eliminate practices that result in predictably lower academic achievement for any student group compared to peers.

II. Ensure Systemic Equity

Mead School District will lead from a system-wide equity plan that is anchored in three critical areas: (1) Family, Student & Community Engagement, (2) Leadership and (3) Teaching & Learning.

A. Family, Student & Community Engagement

Mead School District employees will be expected to cultivate and implement equitable practices for and with students, their families and other community members including:

1. Intentionally seeking and including student perspectives in the development and implementation of culturally responsive teaching and learning practices and curriculum.
2. Engaging family and community members in the development and implementation of culturally appropriate and effective partnerships between home and school.
3. Inviting and including community members to bring multiple perspectives to examining and solving issues that arise.
4. Ensuring each Mead School District site is welcoming and inclusive to all who enter.

B. Leaders

Mead School District leaders will ensure that equity guides employee actions and leads to improved academic results by:

1. Ensuring student voice is routinely valued and incorporated in decision-making.
2. Recruiting, hiring, supporting, retaining and continuously developing a workforce of culturally conscious and responsive administrative, instructional and support personnel.
3. Modeling equity in all practices including decision-making and resource allocation.
4. Replacing inequitable operational practices with systems, policies, procedures and practices that support implementation of this and related policies.
5. Focusing accountability systems and metrics on equitable results for all student groups consistent with Washington State's public school accountability system.

C. Teaching & Learning

Mead School District employees will work together to increase their individual and collective capacity to effectively teach a diverse and changing student population by:

1. Ensuring a positive, supportive and academically rigorous school environment that engages all students and includes multiple pathways for success.
2. Creating and implementing culturally responsive and inclusive instructional practices, curriculum and assessments.
3. Eliminating practices that lead to the over or under representation of any student group compared to peers.
4. Ensure all students graduate from Mead School District schools ready to succeed in a diverse society.

Equity Goals

In order to achieve equity for all students, the Mead School District Board of Directors establishes the following goals:

- Equitable Access – The district shall provide every student with equitable access to high quality and relevant instruction, curriculum, support, facilities and other educational resources, even when this means differentiating resources to accomplish this goal.
- Equity Analysis – The district shall review existing policies, programs, professional development and procedures to ensure the promotion of equity, and all applicable new policies, programs and procedures will be developed using equity analysis tools. The district shall remedy the practices, including assessment, that lead to the over-representation of student groups in areas such as special education and discipline, and the under-representation of groups in programs such as talented & gifted and Advanced Placement.
- Workforce Equity – The district shall be intentional about attracting and retaining a workforce that reflects the diversity of its student body. The district shall recruit, employ, support and retain racially and linguistically diverse and culturally competent administrative, instructional and support personnel.
- Professional Development – The district shall provide relevant professional development to strengthen employees' knowledge and skills for eliminating opportunity and achievement gaps.
- Welcoming School Environments – The district shall welcome and embrace families, including families from all backgrounds, those whose first language may not be English, and those who struggle with poverty and/or homelessness, as essential partners in education, school planning and district decision-making. The district shall create welcoming environments that reflect and support the diversity of the student population and community. In addition, the district will include other partners who support the goals of this policy including government agencies, non-profit organizations, businesses and the community in general.
- Multiple Pathways to Success – The district shall create multiple pathways to success in order to meet the needs of students and shall actively encourage, support and expect high academic achievement for students from all student groups.
- Recognizing Diversity – The district shall provide materials and assessments that reflect the diversity of students and staff, and which are geared towards the understanding and appreciation of culture, class, language, ethnicity and other differences that contribute to the uniqueness of each student and staff member.

Responsibility & Accountability

Every Mead School District employee is responsible for the success and achievement of all students. The board will hold the Superintendent, district leaders and school leaders accountable for making measurable progress toward meeting these policy goals.

Implementation, Monitoring & Reporting

The board recognizes these long-term goals will require significant work and resources to implement across all schools. As such, the Superintendent will develop and implement a system-wide equity plan within the district's strategic plan with clear accountability and metrics, which will result in measurable improvements for Mead School District students. The Superintendent shall regularly report progress on the plan and outcomes to the Mead School District Board of Directors and community. The annual goals adopted in the strategic plan will support this policy.

Cross References: 2020 – Curriculum Development & Adoption of Instructional Materials
2110 – Transitional Bilingual/Alternative Education
2161 – Special Education and Related Services for Eligible Students
3115 – Students Experiencing Homelessness – Enrollment Rights & Services
3200 – Rights & Responsibilities
3205 – Sexual Harassment of Students Prohibited
3207 – Prohibition of Harassment, Intimidation & Bullying
3210 – Nondiscrimination
3211 – Transgender Students
3220 – Freedom of Expression
3223 – Freedom of Assembly
3224 – Student Dress
3240 – Student Conduct
4130 – Title I – Parent & Family Engagement
5010 – Non-Discrimination & Affirmative Action

Legal References: Chapter 28A.642 RCW
Chapter 392-190 WAC

Adoption Date: October 12, 2020